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ABSTRACT

As part of an effort to reduce the dropout rate in New York City public schools, a new project called Replicating Exemplary Holding Power Programs was created in June, 1983. Five schools participated as "demonstrators" because they were judged to have noteworthy holding power programs. Five additional "buddy" schools were chosen by the principals of the demonstrator schools. Each of the ten schools was allocated $100,000 to expand and improve holding power strategies aimed at incoming students. Spending was at the principals' discretion; in general, the trend was to use the funds for additional staff and staff time. The schools did not use uniform criteria in selecting program participants: though each school targeted ninth graders, two schools targeted some tenth graders as well. Attendance monitoring was an important facet of the holding power program at all ten schools. In addition, all but one school placed primary focus on one or more of the following: high-interest classes, counseling, and concentrated staff time for small groups of students. Student outcomes showed that the most successful schools were generally those which served only special groups of ninth graders and had a large number of holding power program components. As a whole, targeted students showed higher attendance, promotional, and achievement rates than their comparison groups. (KH)

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OEA Evaluation Report

REPLICATING EXEMPLARY
HOLDING POWER PROGRAMS

1983-84

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REPLICATING EXEMPLARY HOLDING POWER PROGRAMS

1983-84

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SUMMARY

As part of concerted efforts to reduce the dropout rate in New York City public schools, the Chancellor and the Division of High Schools, in June, 1983, created a new project called Replicating Exemplary Holding Power Programs. Ten schools participated in this project. The Division chose five schools as demonstrators because they were judged to have noteworthy holding power programs. The other five were chosen as "buddy" schools by the principals of the demonstrator schools.

An allocation of $100,000 was received by each of the ten schools to expand and improve holding power strategies aimed at incoming students in demonstration and in buddy schools. Funding allocations, which were left to the discretion of individual principals, varied from school to school. They made their decisions on the basis of size, composition and needs of the student body; existing programs; current facilities; and administrative priorities. In general, the trend was to use the funds for additional staff and staff time.

In selecting participants for the program, schools did not use uniform criteria: though all targeted ninth graders, two schools targeted some tenth graders as well. Attendance monitoring was an important facet of the holding power program at all ten schools; in addition, nine of the ten schools placed primary focus on one or more of the following: high-interest classes, counseling, and concentrated staff time for small groups of students.

Communication patterns between paired schools did not always conform to the original intent of the project. For example, one school was not in active communication with any other school; its buddy school communicated with two other nearby schools. Among the nine other schools, communication varied widely, ranging from occasional to considerable.

Among the recommendations included in the evaluation report are the following:

- Decisions about budgetary allotments to address the needs of high risk students should be based, as much as possible, on input from the principal at each school.
- Because of the long-range nature of the dropout problem, funding allocations should be made, where possible, on a multi-year basis which would allow for proper planning and follow-up.
- Release time and/or per session funds should be available for non-administrative staff to participate in interschool meetings, staff training, and curriculum development related to high-interest classes.

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I. INTRODUCTION

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Nearly one-half of New York City public high school students drop out of school before receiving their diplomas. In the last five years, the Division of High Schools has intensified and coordinated its campaign to prevent and retrieve dropouts. This concentrated effort has been labeled "holding power." Each of the 103 mainstream high schools (i.e., academic-comprehensive, vocational-technical, zoned, and specialized high schools) is now mandated to develop, implement, and maintain a concerted holding power plan for its students. Because each school has distinctive facilities, staff experience, and organizational characteristics, the holding power plans reflect different strategies for devising interventions. The plans represent a range of procedures for identifying potential dropouts, establishing at what point intervention should occur, and attempting to keep students in school.

Despite the appropriate diversity in strategies, the common elements of holding power programs need to be identified and evaluated. The identification of such common elements will encourage the development of an effective school improvement program for the Division of High Schools. The common elements can also be used to define the level of development of a school's holding power program. One step in defining effective holding power programs (and their major components) was taken with the special funding of programs in ten high schools in 1983-84.

In June, 1983, the Chancellor and the Division of High Schools created a new project: "Replicating Exemplary Holding Power Programs." The Division chose five of the 103 high schools as "demonstrators" because they were

considered to have noteworthy holding power programs. The schools were Adlai Stevenson, Seward Park, William Taft, Martin Van Buren, and George Wingate. The principals of each of these schools chose another high school to work with in an effort to develop and improve holding power programs for incoming students during the 1983-84 school year. The paired schools were:

- Adlai Stevenson/Herbert Lehman
- Seward Park/Long Island City
- William Taft/Morris
- Martin Van Buren/John Adams
- George Wingate/F.D. Roosevelt

Each of these ten schools was allocated $100,000 for the expansion and improvement of holding power efforts aimed at incoming students. For the demonstrators, the funding allocation was a reward for successfully developing solid dropout prevention strategies and programs, and represented an incentive to refine previous efforts and to focus them on incoming students. The funds afforded the buddy schools an opportunity to develop new programs or try innovative methods that they had not attempted before. In addition, the pairing system enabled personnel in the buddy schools to receive the counsel and advice of their counterparts from the demonstrator schools.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The program had several objectives. Some were relevant to the five demonstrator schools, others pertained to the five buddy schools, and some were directed at all ten schools. These objectives were:

- To reward the demonstrator schools for existing holding power programs which have been considered exemplary.
- To provide a financial incentive to enable the five demonstrator schools to expand and solidify their already noteworthy holding power efforts and to focus those efforts on incoming students.

- To establish a collegial relationship between principals of paired schools in which assistance and advice could be provided to the buddy schools to improve holding power efforts.

- To determine the extent to which noteworthy holding power programs, or aspects of these programs, developed by the five demonstrator schools were replicated in the five buddy schools.

Principals from each pair of high schools were given discretion to determine the most effective way to achieve the holding power objectives in their respective schools.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

The Office of Educational Assessment/High School Evaluation Unit (O.E.A./H.S.E.U.) used several qualitative and quantitative techniques in evaluating the holding power project. These tools and techniques included the following:

- A student roster identified students targeted for services in schools in which the entire ninth grade was not the target. Comparison group students were also listed on a roster when designated by a school. These rosters were matched with achievement test records.

- Structured questionnaires for principals and/or holding power coordinators were used at the beginning of the school year to obtain descraptions of programs and services, and at the end of the year to obtain information about program development and modifications, final budget allocations, and plans for continuing holding power activities.

- Attendance, promotion, and reading and math achievement data were collected from each school for the target and appropriate comparison groups.

The several types of data collected are used in the following chapters to describe and evaluate the approaches to holding power taken by the ten participating schools.

SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of this report is to present the distinctive features of the 1983-84 holding power program in terms of its organization, implementation, and effectiveness. Administrative issues are discussed in Chapter II, project components are described in Chapter III, and student outcome data are presented and analyzed in Chapter IV. Conclusions and recommendations are contained in Chapter V. Profiles of each of the ten schools involved in the project are contained in Appendix A.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

BUDGET ALLOCATIONS AND PROJECT DESIGNS

Each principal made the first major administrative decision -- how to allocate the holding power funds. Principals and other decision-making staff considered such issues as size, composition, and needs of the student body; existing programs; current facilities; and administrative priorities.

Individual administrators allocated their funds in different ways; however, in the main, they used the funds for staff time, particularly for counselors or for such additional administrative and support staff as coordinators, family assistants, and clerical/secretarial personnel. Principals at three schools added teachers or otherwise reduced class size.

The holding power activities at each school are outlined in Figure 1. Included in this figure are activities funded by the special holding power allotment as well as those funded through tax-levy and other sources. Decisions about budgets and program design are most appropriately viewed in light of each school's existing holding power program and each school's target population. The flexibility provided by the funding gave administrators the option of starting a new program for the ninth grade (Morris), targeting a special group of students (Van Buren), extending an already well-developed effort (Stevenson), or concentrating on attendance monitoring (Seward Park). The program at Morris was additionally supported by a $20,000 grant from the Ford Foundation in recognition of its previous success in motivating students. At Van Buren, where less than a fifth of the student body had major problems with reading, the principal designed a program that concentrated on retrieving those students with significant

FIGURE 1

A Summary of the Holding Power Components in Each of the Ten Schools

	School Pairs									
	Stevenson	Lehman	Seward Park	L.I.C.	Taft	Morris	Van Buren	Adams	Wingate	F.D.R.
Grade										
Ninth	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tenth						X				X
Target Group										
All students not in Special Programs	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	
Selected Students							X	X		X
Attendance										
Monitoring	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Computer Calls					X	X			X	X
Staff Calls	X	X	X	X		X	X			X
Postcards	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Home Visits		X	X	X	X	X			X	X
Incentives	X				X	X	X			
Counseling										
Individual	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Group	X	X				X				
Peer						X				
Career	X						X			
Programming										
Career-linked High Interest	X	X				X	X		X	X
Block Programming					X	X	X	X		X
Reduced Class Size	X			X		X	X	X		
Shortened School Day							X			X
Curriculum Development	X	X				X	X			
Staff Training						X	X			
Equipment	X	X			X		X		X	

- Three schools targeted small groups of selected students.
- All schools focused their efforts on ninth graders. Two schools also included small groups of tenth graders in their targeted groups.
- Attendance monitoring and individual counseling were components of the holding power efforts in each school.

attendance problems. A ninth-grade coordinator and a counselor already staffed a retention and attendance program at Stevenson; the new money permitted the expansion of services, the addition of support services, and an increase in career-related activities. Seward Park emphasized basic attendance monitoring and student contacts in a school with tremendous student mobility and a large number of over-age students who have recently immigrated.

All principals targeted ninth-grade students; F.D.R. and Van Buren principals included some tenth graders as well. The number of participating students ranged from 33 at John Adams to 953 at Wingate. Principals at seven schools selected students who were not already in such special programs as bilingual education, special education, honors, or college prep. Stevenson targeted 450 students; Lehman 210; Seward Park 680; Long Island City 400; Taft 510; Morris 230; and F.D.R. 130.

Two of these seven schools changed their target populations during the year. Seward Park initially targeted ninth and tenth graders with attendance problems in the Seward Academy, its mini-school, and students with special problems in Preparation for Raising Educational Performance (PREP)*; it later included all incoming ninth graders and some incoming tenth graders. Wingate first targeted 49 incoming ninth graders and then expanded its holding power program to encompass its entire ninth grade.

Three schools -- F.D.R., Van Buren, and John Adams -- selected students with low attendance records, low achievement levels, and/or discipline

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* Preparation for Raising Educational Performance (PREP) is a theme based program of instruction and supportive services for incoming ninth-graders whose skills in reading are two or more years below grade level. Prep was first implemented in 1983-84.

problems. F.D.R. staff worked intensively with three classes of ninth and tenth graders at its mini-school; Van Buren established the Corporate Business Institute (C.B.I.) for 34 students. John Adams (paired with Van Buren) block-programmed 33 students and reduced the size of some of their classes.

Attendance monitoring was an important facet of holding power programs at all ten schools. Otherwise, the focus varied from school to school. The main focus at nine of the schools can be roughly divided into three categories: attendance monitoring; high-interest classes; and counseling and concentrated staff time for a small group of students. At Taft and at two paired schools, Seward Park and Long Island City, attendance monitoring was the major focus. Counseling and high-interest classes were central to the programs at Lehman, Stevenson, and Morris. (Lehman and Stevenson were paired schools, and the principal at Morris, though having no official relationship with them, worked closely with administrators at the other two schools throughout the year.) Wingate's principal, aware that the special funding might last for only one year, chose to invest in equipment that he felt would be of long-term benefit to the school. In addition to major equipment purchases, the Wingate program provided lunchtime tutoring for ninth graders.

COMMUNICATION AMONG PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

The Replicating Exemplary Holding Power Programs were intended to improve communication among the ten participating schools, especially between paired schools, and to determine the extent to which the buddy schools replicated exemplary programs developed by the demonstrator schools. Before the project began, communication between schools had typically been limited

to borough-wide principals' meetings, except in the cases of principals who had shared projects previously or whose schools were geographically contiguous.

Communication patterns did not always follow the designated pairings. Stevenson, Lehman, and Morris communicated frequently, as did Lehman and Wingate. Principals from two pairs -- Seward Park/Long Island City and F.D.R./Wingate -- had occasional contact. Van Buren and John Adams had significant communication in the fall, but less in the spring. Taft, paired with Morris, did not actively communicate with any other school. The change in principals at Taft between the first project meeting in June, 1983, and the start of the project in the fall may account for its limited interaction with other program participants.

By the end of the school year, Stevenson, Lehman, Morris, and Wingate were still in active communication with at least one of the other holding power schools. Principals who maintained significant contact had had personal and professional contact before the start of the project. However, the holding power program had the effect of improving communication among these four schools by allowing them to focus on specific common objectives and by making it possible for principals and, in some instances, staff to have more frequent contact.

Contact among schools mainly involved principals. However, their ongoing responsibilities made face-to-face meetings difficult, and most contact was by telephone. Because of a lack of release time, there was little communication among teachers in participating schools. Coordinators and counselors at demonstrator and buddy schools contacted each other more often. Topics of discussion during the year included: funding allocations; recruiting; monitoring attendance; articulation with feeder schools; recog-

nition and reward strategies; and ideas for both "hands-on" classes and extra-curricular activities. In general, the principals considered contact valuable.

The three paired schools with common programmatic focuses achieved to a limited extent the goal of having all or part of holding power projects replicated at buddy schools. Commenting on her paired school (Seward Park), the Long Island City principal noted, "We've copied some of what they do." Both were mainly involved in attendance monitoring. The Stevenson/Lehman pair focused on counseling and high-interest courses. This was also the emphasis at Morris, whose principal had a close working relationship with the Stevenson and Lehman principals. Van Buren and John Adams (paired schools) and F.D.R. were the three schools to target a small group of students. The F.D.R. mini-school approach, which encouraged a close relationship between students and their single counselor and teacher, was different from that of Wingate, its paired school.

Even when paired schools had the same programmatic emphasis, implementation reflected the individual principal's orientation more than the fact of the pairing. The Van Buren and F.D.R. programs, for example, were far more alike than those of Van Buren and its buddy school, John Adams. The Van Buren principal, whose background was in counseling, established a separate Corporate Business Institute (C.B.I.) for that school's target students, which provided them with the concentrated services of one teacher and one counselor. F.D.R.'s approach was similar: it added three classes to its mini-school and emphasized close student/staff interaction. On the other hand, while a small group of students at John Adams was targeted and block-programmed for reduced register classes in several subjects, these

students did not constitute a discrete program within the school and did not receive concentrated counseling services.

The nature of the pairing and two of the program's objectives, however, defined in most cases the relationship between demonstrator and buddy school as an unequal one. The principal of one buddy school noted that the structure of the pairing impeded efforts to share successful holding power strategies with the principal of the paired demonstrator school; he saw interactions as defined in advance as being between "more successful" and "less successful" administrators. The working relationship among Lehman, Morris, and Stevenson -- the first two buddy schools, the third a demonstrator -- overcame this potential problem. It was characterized by a learning situation to which each contributed and from which each benefited. The Stevenson principal, no less than the principals from the other two schools, spoke stongly about how much she and her school had gained from the three-way relationship.

The Stevenson/Lehman/Morris relationship was clearly the most successful to come out of the program. In addition to other inter-school contacts, principals, coordinators, and counselors from the three schools met at mid-year to share information and to evaluate strategies they had used the first term. They discussed the need to carry over holding power activities into the students' tenth year, rather than to withdraw program services at the end of the ninth grade. Special activities shared among these schools included the programming of weight and aerobic classes, a ninth-grade dance, and a newsletter for ninth graders.

At the end of the year, a counselor from a non-participating Bronx school contacted a counterpart at Morris and expressed interest in repli-

cating some of the features of Morris' ninth-grade program. Such voluntary contact suggests the possibility of developing a consortium of interested Bronx schools that could undertake a joint attack on the problems of student retention and motivation.

Principals at most participating schools wanted to see more frequent communication between schools and wanted it extended to include teachers, coordinators, and other staff. The Seward Park principal hoped for a conference which would permit half its teachers to go to Long Island City, its paired school. The Long Island City principal wanted to learn more about the Van Buren approach to a small target population. Several principals favored contact among all the schools. One recommended additional city-wide meetings of schools with holding power programs.

STAFFING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The commitment of participating principals to the holding power program is reflected in part by the fact that most of them hand-picked the program teachers. While this was done at all the schools with small target populations, it was also the rule at schools which had targeted all ninth-grade students, except those in special programs, for holding power services. Principals generally felt that experienced teachers were essential to a successful holding power effort. In one school where the principal's intent was to assign the most experienced teachers to incoming students, one block of students was inadvertently scheduled for three new teachers, with discouraging results. Teacher versatility and specialization were major considerations at some schools. One school required every mini-school teacher to handle all subjects; at another school, a pilot taught the aerospace class and other professionals taught the various hands-on career-

oriented classes.

Administrators also used care in the selection of support staff. The Van Buren principal chose a guidance counselor new to the school system for his non-traditional program because he expected her to be very flexible. At Morris, where a "Class of 1987" office for ninth graders was staffed with a counselor, a coordinator, a dean, two family assistants, and a secretary, the principal chose "mother" and "father" figures as key personnel, particularly appropriate choices in a school in which 50 percent of the students come from single-parent families. Control over staff selection was not, however, always possible. Lack of coordination with the attendance bureau, for example, hampered the Seward Park principal, who had attendance teachers he had picked reassigned on a day's notice.

Principals at several schools used holding power funds to increase support staff time. The holding power dean at Seward Park taught only three classes. The Stevenson coordinator also received release time from teaching; the Morris coordinator did not teach at all. Principals at nearly every school hired part-time and full-time paraprofessionals or family assistants to make home visits and phone calls and to monitor attendance.

Two principals with mini-schools reported a noticeable discrepancy between the positive attitudes of program teachers and the attitudes of non-mini-school teachers. While program teachers enjoyed the family environment of an effective mini-school, those outside the program were burdened by oversized classes and fewer support services and were often not well informed about the workings and goals of the mini-school. Such problems did not crop up at schools with larger groups of targeted students.

Beyond orientation meetings, staff development was limited, if it took place at all. Staff training was very much the exception. The Van Buren principal met every day at first with the single teacher in the C.B.I.; he also met with the new guidance counselor. Four teacher meetings were held at Morris in the fall and two in the spring; the school's block-programming facilitated scheduling. The school's principal was the exception in allotting funds for meetings for teachers in different departments. For the most part, principals used departmental meetings as the only forum to discuss holding power strategies. Stevenson teachers met once a month. The principal there recalled how five years ago, with a .2 training allotment per teacher, they had met weekly. With no available per session allotments, additional meetings were no longer possible.

Nearly all the principals stressed the need to make staff training a substantive part of the program. They indicated that if they received another $100,000 allocation they would allot some to per session money for staff development. One noted that staff development becomes even more important as students move to the tenth grade. The Morris principal hoped to expand staff training efforts in the future. The Van Buren principal saw the need at his school to extend training to mainstream teachers, those not involved in the mini-school. Principals at Seward Park, Lehman, Wingate, and John Adams also identified staff training as an important part of a future program. In the pilot year of the program, however, direct student services and equipment were the clear priorities.

III. PROJECT COMPONENTS

ATTENDANCE ACTIVITIES

Holding absenteeism to the lowest possible level was a pivotal aspect of the holding power programs. In striving to reach that goal, the ten participating schools used at least two of the following strategies: computerized and personal phone calls; communication with parents via postcards; a reward and recognition system; individual, group, peer, and career counseling; and, to a limited degree, home visits. (Although attendance and counseling are discussed separately in this paper, they are inseparable in a well-developed holding power program.)

Principals at F.D.R., Morris, Taft, and Wingate used an automated dialing and message system (TELSOL) to contact absent students or their parents. This system transmits pre-recorded messages regarding lateness, attendance, cutting, or special events; calls can be made during school hours, as well as during the early morning, weekend, and late evening hours when there is greater likelihood of reaching parents. At F.D.R., a student aide from the mini-school made early morning calls to students likely to be late or absent. Similarly, aides at Long Island City and Van Buren made early morning and late evening calls. Stevenson's family assistant called the parents of absentees in three ninth-grade classes immediately following the homeroom period. A Morris student aide made follow-up calls to students targeted as "at risk." School staff stressed that the addition of phone equipment and the availability of staff allowed them to deal immediately with absentees, thus eliminating delays between the time of absence and the time of contact.

Though students reported that personal calls produced a more positive response than postcards or taped messages, any contact served to alert parents to absences. A significant number of students reported parental responses similar to that of the student who said, "My mother got on my case, and I went back to school the next day."

Staff at several schools reported an increase in home visits. Staff was hired at F.D.R., Taft, Morris, and Lehman specifically for that purpose. More money for phone contacts this year freed Stevenson staff to make more home visits than in the past. Because of limited staff time, home visits were made primarily in cases of chronic absenteeism or in instances where parents could not be reached by phone.

Some participating schools placed a major focus on attendance monitoring. Funding allowed Long Island City to become more systematized in collecting attendance data. At Seward Park, family assistants monitored attendance, compiling and distributing to teachers a computer-generated list of absentees and cutters. This information was fed into Seward Park's previously established "adopt-a-class" program in which each teacher took major responsibility for the attendance of a particular class. Also, Seward Park's attendance committee met more frequently during 1983-84. Holding power staff at Morris analyzed monthly attendance reports for any trends indicating the need for action to forestall greater absenteeism.

Schools set up a variety of staff interventions and student incentive systems designed to increase attendance. At Stevenson the coordinator visited a given homeroom whenever attendance was low. Students with attendance problems were given a sign-in sheet for classes so that their parents could verify their attendance. The coordinator at Morris monitored

student attendance daily, something that had not been done the previous year because of inadequate staff. The family assistant at Morris met weekly with special groups of 25 students with spotty attendance.

Four schools used a reward system as an additional method of increasing attendance. Redeemable "pretzel certificates" were given to Van Buren students for outstanding attendance. Each month the class at Stevenson with the most improved attendance was treated to a trip or movie. At Morris and Stevenson, rewards for perfect attendance were given at an assembly, and individual and class achievements were noted in ninth-grade newspapers. Taft students were awarded attendance certificates.

COUNSELING

Counseling was a major part of the holding power efforts in six of the participating schools. Full-time guidance counselors were hired at four schools (Taft, John Adams, F.D.R., Van Buren), while at Lehman the hours of the newly-funded guidance counselor were expanded from part-time in the fall to full-time in the spring term. At Van Buren and F.D.R., two of the three schools with small target populations, full-time guidance counselors were hired; the result was a concentration of counseling services on a relatively small student population. At Van Buren, the coordinator conducted a daily class focused on job and career awareness and on personal development. At John Adams, counseling services were not emphasized.

A listing of the schools that used holding power funds to hire guidance staff gives only a partial picture of the role of counseling in each program. At Wingate, for example, the tax-levy guidance counselor was very assertive in reaching out to ninth graders; students interviewed there showed an ex-

cellent awareness of the school's counseling services. At Morris and Stevenson, extensive guidance programs already existed. Neither used holding power funds to purchase the services of a guidance counselor. Most of the students interviewed at these schools identified the guidance counselor as a person to go to with problems. Prior to Stevenson's participation in the holding power project, the school offered individual counseling on a referral and crisis basis, ten-week group counseling sessions, and the once-a-week services of social workers. During the 1983-84 school year, systematic career guidance was expanded, parent workshops were conducted, and more active outreach to students was done by counselors, who visited classes and encouraged students to seek them out; a half-time family assistant was added in the spring. Individual and group counseling had also been offered previously at Morris. These weekly full-class guidance sessions dealt with such topics as peer presssure, test-taking techniques, sex education, and substance abuse. This year, Morris added a peer counseling program in which seniors met with ninth graders. The location of the ninth-grade program in a single, continuously-staffed office provided a space where, anytime from 6:45 A.M. to 5 P.M., students could find someone to talk to about a problem. Morris used part of its Ford Foundation grant to install a special phone in this office so that parents and students could make contact without having to go through the central switchboard.

The evaluation team observed a number of very positive interactions between counselors and holding power students. In general, guidance personnel and ninth-grade coordinators appeared very committed to the program and clearly concerned with helping the students. However, the counselor at one school, atypically, had no personal knowledge of holding power students

and was considered by the principal to have a very negative opinion of them.

Several principals stressed the importance of providing services for parents as well as for students. The Lehman principal who added a half-time family worker to his school's program, observed that ninth-grade attendance problems and family problems were linked and that counseling and referrals were therefore key to strategies dealing with attendance. Van Buren's principal emphasized that a knowledge of students' families was essential to keeping them in school. Having himself come from a counseling background, he made a special effort to arrange contacts with agencies concerned with health, medical, foster care, and related issues. He also helped connect students and their families to a non-profit counseling support group near Van Buren. More parents came in for consultation with the counseling staff during 1983-84 than in previous years. This increase resulted from a more extensive outreach program: the program coordinator sent memos to parents concerning their children's failures and recommended that parents see a school counselor. Stevenson offered parent workshops as part of its program. During the fall term, the guidance counselor ran the first three of a series of workshops on such topics as coping with one's child's maturity and getting the most out of parent/teacher interviews.

Students at a number of schools stressed the importance of the counseling role played by teachers. Van Buren students, for example, singled out the core teacher as well as the counselor as people with whom they discuss personal and school problems. F.D.R. students identified their teacher as playing a similar role. One student there said, "I can get close to the teacher and can work after school. It's like a big family." This attitude extended beyond students in mini-schools. Students at Stevenson described

their teachers and counselors as caring; several said they had discussed problems with one or more of their teachers. This link is particularly important since many students there said they found the large size of both the building and the student body frightening or alienating. Teachers also played a valuable counseling role at Morris, another large school.

Most participating schools did not focus on career counseling. Stevenson, however, offered increased systematic career guidance services in 1983-84. Both Morris and Stevenson administered career interest instruments, such as the JOB-O, something Morris had not done before. Van Buren conducted a major career counseling activity. Working with a New York State Employment counselor assigned to the school, staff gave all of the 34 target students vocational and career tests at the New York State Employment Office. This battery of tests was followed by individual conferences with students and parents. Because he is not sure whether the students in grades nine or ten are sufficiently mature to get the full benefit of such testing, the principal is uncertain whether he would again undertake this activity.

Although it will not affect the students targeted in 1983-84, the expanded articulation of counseling staff at Lehman and Morris with their counterparts at feeder schools will help improve services offered to future incoming ninth graders. While staff at other high schools kept counselors at feeder schools informed about changes in programs and requirements, Lehman and Morris significantly expanded their articulation efforts during the 1983-84 year. This expansion should have a long-term impact on their ability to provide effective counseling services. Guidance staff at these two schools worked closely with that at Stevenson, which began its articu-

lation program in 1979 and now starts recruitment efforts when students at its three feeder schools are in the seventh grade. Stevenson staff held a workshop entitled, "Articulation with the Feeder School: The Forerunner of Holding Power" at the May, 1984 holding power conference.

In 1983-84, Lehman staff met for the first time, with the guidance counselors of prospective students at feeder schools to make up ninth-grade programs in consultation with counselors familiar with each student's academic and personal needs. As a result of their meetings with Stevenson staff, Morris counselors met in the spring with counselors of incoming students to discuss programming and individual student needs. Such articulation enabled these schools to identify the counseling, programming, and support needs of incoming students on the basis of information more detailed than can readily be obtained from records forwarded from the feeder schools to the high school.

PROGRAMMING

Participating holding power schools employed a variety of flexible programming strategies for their students: reduced class size; block programming; and a shortened school day. Some classes at four schools were reduced in size. Ninth-grade classes at Morris were slightly smaller than mainstream classes, with 25 students registered. Long Island City, which added a ninth-grade teacher, offered some smaller ninth-grade reading classes. In the fall, two reading classes at John Adams contained only ten students each; in the spring, three classes in English, mathematics, and general science were reduced in size and a special homeroom with a half register was created. Stevenson had no reduced-sized classes in the fall, but it offered four such classes during the spring term. Classes at F.D.R.'s

mini-school were the only ones larger than mainstream classes, with each having a minimum of 35 students.

Half of the schools used block programming. Incoming ninth-graders in Taft's Academy Program were block-programmed for science, global history, and typing careers, and incoming students with reading or math deficiencies in the PREP program were block-programmed for reading, global history, and career education. Project UPLIFT students at John Adams were block-programmed for the entire school day. C.B.I. students at Van Buren were block-programmed for three hours during which they took computer programming, experiential mathematics, business dynamics, and personality development; they took English, social studies, and physical education in the mainstream.

The entire ninth grade at Morris was block-programmed for its nine-period day. One Morris staff member with mixed feelings about this scheduling approach noted that the interaction of students who acted out together affected all their classes. Expressing a similar attitude, some students noted that their chances of getting into trouble increased with students they knew well; other students, however, welcomed contact with a particular group of students, especially in a large school.

The three classes of F.D.R. mini-school students spent the entire five-period day together. Each class had one or two teachers for English, social studies, mathematics, science, and an elective. Because of staffing and flexible scheduling, F.D.R. mini-school teachers could spend extra time on a given subject on a day when students either were very involved in the topic or needed extra help with skills or concepts; teachers could spend more time on another subject the following day. In the long run, teachers could cover all required material. Several F.D.R. students noted that this approach

made them feel less pressured than in classes where they had a clearly-defined 40-minute period in which to understand the lesson and move on to another lesson, even if they had not grasped the subject matter.

Shortening the school day was the least frequently used of all the options. Students at almost all of the schools had a standard-length school day. Stevenson had a shortened day only for truants. F.D.R. mini-school students had a three-hour day; students interviewed there felt very positive about the shortened day because it made it easier for them to work after school. Morris students, on the other hand, regularly had a nine-period day, during which they took six subjects plus a double-period of remediation.

HIGH-INTEREST CLASSES AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Prior to the holding power funding, all of the participating schools offered some high-interest courses, usually with a vocational orientation. Wingate offered flight training, for example, and Long Island City gave courses in computers and word processing. At half of the schools, principals used holding power funds to develop additional high-interest courses or to extend already-developed courses to incoming ninth graders.

F.D.R. staff gave mini-school students interest inventories and career questionnaires, partly in order to provide electives and trips to which students would respond positively. An important component of the mini-school this year was a series of career-related trips: the photography class went to a photography studio; students taking computer courses and business subjects visited the stock exchange and a business school.

The C.B.I. at Van Buren, a new project in 1983-84, was built around high-interest courses in computer programming, experiential mathematics, and

business dynamics, which combined basic skills with a career focus. Although electric typewriters mostly had not been used by ninth graders at Van Buren, their use in the C.B.I. classes served as an additional motivating factor. Like the C.B.I. concept itself, the courses offered were developed for the 1983-84 holding power program.

Lehman introduced the idea of ninth-grade electives. Students chose such subjects as merchandising, laboratory, computer electronics (using a newly-acquired computer), slimnastics, or weight training (using a newly-bought nautilus machine). In addition, space exploration was made central to parts of the regular ninth-grade curiculum. Students took a course in space exploration instead of general science, along with a science fiction reading and vocabulary class in lieu of the standard English course. These new courses indicate that curriculum development was an important part of the Lehman program.

For the first time, Stevenson staff encouraged entering students, while still in their intermediate schools, to choose such electives as orchestral music, art, stagecraft, nursing, occupational sewing, drama, and dance. Students could take four such classes over the year and then select a specialty. (The performing arts electives had not been open to ninth graders in previous years.)

This year Morris staff developed an extensive and innovative series of "strand" classes for its ninth-grade holding power students, four in career areas, four in the humanities: computer literacy, business, aerospace, health careers, music, art, drama, and dance. (Art and dance were subsequently dropped from the offerings.) Designed to be taken for one term only, the strands were intended to introduce students to various high-

interest subjects with an eye towards their choosing one as a major area of concentration. Students took each strand class for 20 days before moving on to another. After the completion of the second strand, an afternoon Freshman Fair, to which parents were invited, was presented. The fair featured a dance exhibit, as well as exhibits of work related to business, aerospace, and art. Following the fair, the principal and program staff met with the students for feedback regarding the strand offerings. Where possible, strand classes went on trips: the music class attended a concert, the business class went to the Federal Reserve Bank, and the computer class visited I.B.M. Teachers of each strand prepared a guide with three to five objectives and a calendar of activities detailed enough so that the class could be taught by other teachers.

While the development of innovative classes occurred in several of the schools, there was little systematic curriculum effort that included all the courses ninth-grade holding power students might take. The trend in the curriculum area in this first year was to continue the move toward high-interest and/or career-linked classes. Several schools indicated that curriculum development was an important area that, like staff development and training, required much more work.

IV. STUDENT OUTCOMES

The impact of holding power services was assessed by analyzing target and comparison students' data on attendance, promotion rates, and standardized reading and math test results. Improvement particularly in attendance and achievement is indicative of program success since the goal of the holding power program was to prevent and retrieve dropouts. Also, previous studies suggest that an increase in attendance is positively correlated with improvement in achievement and promotion. In addition, these data are appropriate for comparative purposes.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance data are presented for students targeted for holding power services and for appropriate comparison groups in each school. A subsample of ninth-grade students was targeted in seven schools, while all incoming ninth graders received holding power services in the remaining three schools. (Small groups of tenth graders were included in the target group at two schools as well.) The choice of comparison groups depended upon which students were selected for services. When administrators targeted all incoming ninth-grade students, their attendance was compared with that of the previous year's ninth graders. Ninth-grade attendance from both 1983-84 and 1982-83 was reported in the schools which targeted only special groups of students for holding power services.

School administrators compiled attendance data for their targeted students and sent this information to the O.E.A./H.S.E.U. The evaluation team calculated all other attendance information from Period Attendance Reports.*

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* Period Attendance Reports (P.A.R.) are standardized monthly records of attendance compiled in each school and collected by the Office of Student Information Services.

The attendance of the ninth-grade comparison groups includes long-term absentees (L.T.A.s). Although L.T.A.s lower a school's average attendance rate, including them is appropriate since the targeted students are, like L.T.A.s, at-risk, potential drop-outs.

School profiles are also included for each school and are presented in Appendix A. Information such as size, location, level of building utilization, ethnic composition of the student body, and percentage of students reading two or more years below grade level comprise the profile of each school. School profiles provide an essential context for evaluating the data. Holding power efforts and student outcome data at crowded schools where the majority of students read below grade level are necessarily going to differ from those at schools where most students read at or above grade level. On the basis of school profile data, five of the schools: Stevenson, Taft, Morris, Seward Park, and Wingate could be classified as serving almost entirely high-risk populations.

The attendance rates of the ten schools in the project are summarized in Table 1. The data include the number of holding power components, attendance rates for target and comparison groups, and differences between these two attendance rates.

Generally, as shown in Table 1: 1) the targeted groups in those schools which offered seven or more holding power components experienced higher yearly attendance rates than their comparison groups; 2) the targeted groups in those schools which offered five or six holding power components experienced lower yearly attendance rates than their comparison groups; 3) positive differences between the attendance rates of targeted and comparison

Table 1
Comparison Between the Attendance Rates of Target and Comparison Groups in Holding Power Program During 1983-84 by School with Number of Program Components

Paired Schools	Number of Holding Power Components	Target Group(s) Description and Numbers	Target Group(s) Yearly Attendance Rate	Comparison Group(s) Description and Numbers	Comparison Group(s) Yearly Attendance Rate	Difference Between Attendance Rate of Target and Comparison Groups
Adlai Stevenson High School	11	Special Ninth Grade Program (N=451)	85.4%	Ninth Graders not in the targeted Group (N=1,042)	59.3%	+26.1%
Herbert H. Lehman High School	9	Holding Power Ninth Grade Students (N=214)	84.6	Ninth Graders not in the Targeted Group (N=214)	60.4	+24.2
William H. Taft High School	8	Group A: Ninth Graders in Academy (N=132)	72.9	Ninth Graders not in Group A (N=786)	64.8	+ 8.1
		Group B: Ninth Graders in PREP and Toro (N=381)	59.2	Ninth Graders not in Group B (N=537)	70.8	-11.6
Morris High School	14	Group A: Freshman PREP (N=151)	67.6	Ninth Graders not in Group A (N=623)	60.6	+ 7.0
		Group B: Freshman not in PREP (N=85)	85.4	Ninth Graders not in Group B (N=689)	59.1	+26.3
George Wingate High School	7	Incoming Ninth Grades (N=953)	71.6	Ninth Graders in 1982-83 (N=1,036)	70.6	+ 1.0

(Continued)

Table 1 (Continued)

Comparison Between the Attendance Rates of Target and Comparison Groups in Holding Power Program During 1983-84 by School with Number of Program Components

Paired Schools	Number of Holding Power Components	Target Group(s) Description and Numbers	Target Group(s) Yearly Attendance Rate	Comparison Group(s) Description and Numbers	Comparison Group(s) Yearly Attendance Rate	Difference Between Attendance Rate of Target and Comparison Groups
F.D. Roosevelt High School	9	Group A: Special Incoming Ninth Graders (N=54)	63.8%	Ninth Graders not in Group A (N=671)	76.8%	-13.0%
		Group B: Special Incoming Ninth Graders with Low Reading Scores and Hold-ver Ninth Graders (N=28)	80.0	Ninth Graders not in Group B (N=697)	75.6	+ 4.4
		Group C: Students repeating the Ninth Grade and Special incoming Tenth Graders (N=44)	70.4	Ninth Graders not in Group C (N=681)	76.1	- 5.7
Martin Van Buren High School	12	Ninth and Tenth Grade Students in Corporate Business Institute (N=34)	84.3	Ninth Graders not in the Targeted Group (N=252)	89.1	- 4.8
John Adams High School	5	Ninth Grade Students in Project UPLIFT (N=33)	52.5	Ninth Graders not in the Targeted Group (N=746)	80.9	-28.4
Long Island City High School	6	Incoming Ninth Grade (N=409)	78.0	Ninth Graders in 1982-83 (N=348)	80.2	- 2.2
Seward Park High School	5	Incoming Ninth Grade (N=675)	71.7	Ninth Graders in 1982-83 (N=552)	74.6	- 2.9

- The attendance rates of the targeted groups ranged from a low of 53 percent at John Adams to a high of 85 percent in Adlai Stevenson and in one of the two special groups served at Morris.

- Adlai Stevenson showed the largest positive difference (26 percent) between its targeted and comparison group.

groups were found in those schools which served homogeneous (i.e., ninth grade only) and/or smaller groups and/or had only one target group; and, 4) negative differences between the attendance rates of targeted and comparison groups were found in those schools which served heterogeneous (i.e., incoming and holdover ninth graders, and tenth graders) and/or larger groups and/or had two or more target groups.

PROMOTION RATES

Promotion data are presented in Table 2 for students targeted for holding power services and for the appropriate comparison groups. Promotion rates are reported because they are considered the best indicator of the academic success of "high-risk" students participating in holding power programs. Schools do not routinely generate promotion rates as is done for attendance. The O.E.A./H.S.E.U. requested promotion data for both targeted and comparison groups from each participating site. Responses to these requests varied: most schools (70 percent) supplied information about both groups, the others were able to generate information for the group targeted during the school year, but were not able to provide rates for the comparison group.

The information presented in Table 2 shows generally that, in schools which reported complete information for both targeted and comparison groups: 1) positive differences between the promotion rates of targeted and comparison groups were found in those schools which served smaller groups and had at least nine holding power components; and, 2) negative differences between the promotion rates of targeted and comparison groups were found in those schools which served all ninth graders and/or had more than one target group. Individual schools explained their promotion rates as follows: 1) At Morris,

Table 2
Promotion Rates for Targeted and
Comparison Groups in Holding Power Program: 1983-84

Paired Schools	Number of Components	Target Group(s) Description and Numbers	Target Group(s) Yearly Promotion Rate	Comparison Group(s) Description and Numbers	Comparison Group(s) Yearly Promotion Rate	Difference Between Promotional Rate of Target and Comparison Groups
Adlai Stevenson	11	One Group of 9th Graders (N=451)	71.2%	Ninth Grade 1982-83	----[a]	-----
H. H. Lehman	9	Holding Power 9th Graders (N=214)	73.6	Ninth Grade 1982-83	60.3%	+13.3%
W. Taft	8	Three Groups of 9th Graders (N=513)	42.0	Ninth Grade 1982-83	45.8	- 3.8
Morris	14	Two Groups of 9th Graders (N=236)	35.9	Ninth Grade 1982-83	24.7	+11.2
G. Wingate	7	Incoming 9th Graders (N=953)	49.9	Ninth Grade 1982-83	----[a]	-----
F.D.R.	9	Three Groups of 9th and 10th Graders (N=126)	84.1	Ninth Grade	76.2 1983-84	+ 7.9
M. Van Buren	12	One Group of 9th and 10th Graders (N=34)	82.0	Ninth Grade 1983-84	87.0	- 5.0
John Adams	5	One Group of 9th Graders (N=33)	100.0	Ninth Grade 1983-84	100.0	0.0
L.I. City	6	Incoming 9th Graders (N=409)	81.9	Ninth Grade 1982-83	87.5	- 5.6
Seward Park	5	Incoming 9th Graders (N=675)	22.4	Ninth Grade 1982-83	----[a]	-----

[a]Information was not available from the school

- Thirty percent of the schools did not have information on the comparison groups' 1982-83 promotional rates.
- The promotion rate gain at Morris was attributed by school administrators to the significant number of intervention strategies implemented as part of the program.
- Comparatively lower promotion rates for the targeted group at Taft were due primarily to the presence of several consistently truant students in the program.

the higher promotion rate was attributed by school administrators to the large number of intervention strategies implemented as part of the program; 2) At Taft, the comparatively lower promotion rates for the targeted group were due primarily to the presence of several consistently truant participating students; 3) The lower promotion rates at Long Island City among targeted students were related to the large size of this group and the relatively few (six) holding power components; and, 4) The high promotion rates at John Adams (100 percent) can be explained by the school's policy of promoting all ninth graders.

ACHIEVEMENT ON STANDARDIZED READING AND MATHEMATICS TESTS

Achievement data in reading and math are presented for students targeted for holding power services and for appropriate comparison groups in each school. Data reported include the number and percentage of students showing N.C.E.* improvement for targeted and comparison groups, and differences between the two percentages. A subsample of ninth graders was targeted in seven schools while all incoming ninth graders received holding power services in the remaining three. (Small groups of tenth graders were included in the target group at two schools.) The choice of comparison groups depended upon which students were selected for services. When administrators targeted all incoming ninth-grade students, achievement data for ninth

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* Normal curve equivalent (N.C.E.) scores are similar to percentile ranks but, unlike percentile ranks, are based on an equal-interval scale. Normal curve equivalent scores are based on a scale ranging from 1 to 99 with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of approximately 21. Because N.C.E. scores are equally spaced apart, arithmetic and statistical calculations such as averages are meaningful; in addition, comparisons of N.C.E. scores may be made across different achievement tests.

graders in 1982-83 were reported. For the seven schools which targeted only selected groups of students for holding power services, achievement data for all ninth graders in 1983-84 were reported.

The achievement data in reading and math for the ten schools in the project are summarized in Tables 3 and 4. The information presented in these tables indicates that, generally: 1) those schools in which the targeted groups showed higher rates of improvement* than the comparison groups from pre- to posttesting in both reading and math were those which served only special groups of ninth graders and had eight or more components; and, 2) those schools in which the targeted groups showed lower rates of improvement that the comparison groups from pre- to posttesting in reading and math were those which served students in both grades nine and ten or all incoming students.

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* Improvement was defined as obtaining a higher N.C.E. score in the posttest than the N.C.E. pretest score.

Table 3
Percentage of Students Showing Improvement in Reading NCE Scores
in Holding Power Targeted and Comparison Groups: 1983-84

SCHOOL	Number of Holding Power Components	Description and Number	Targeted Group N	Targeted Group % Improving	Comparison Group N	Comparison Group % Improving	% Difference
Stevenson	11	Special Group of Ninth graders (N=451)	294	32.6%	308	18.2%	14.4%
Lehman	9	Special Group of Ninth graders (N=214)	117	35.9	112	25.0	14.9
Taft	8	Special Group of Ninth graders (N=513)	265	29.8	246	22.8	7.0
Morris	14	Special Group of Ninth graders (N=236)	160	49.4	154	22.7	26.7
G. Wingate	7	Incoming Ninth graders (N=953)	613	35.2	590	45.1	-9.9
F. D. R.	9	Special Group of 9th and 10th graders (N=126)	47	29.8	52	44.2	-14.4
M. Van Buren	12	Special Group of 9th and 10th graders (N=34)	22	50.0	23	78.3	-28.3

(continued)

Table 3 (Continued)
Percentage of Students Showing Improvement in Reading NCE Scores
in Holding Power Targeted and Comparison Groups: 1983-84

SCHOOL	Number of Holding Power Components	Description and Number	Targeted Group N	Targeted Group % Improving	Comparison Group N	Comparison Group % Improving	% Difference
John Adams	5	Special Group of Ninth graders (N=33)	21	9.5	20	45.0	-35.5
Long Island City	6	Incoming Ninth graders (N=409)	208	45.7	255	51.8	-6.1
Seward Park	5	Incoming Ninth graders (N=675)	274	16.4	238	24.8	-8.4

- The percentage of students improving their reading N.C.E. achievement ranged from a low of 10 percent at John Adams to a high of 50 percent at Van Buren.
- Four schools -- Taft, Lehman, Morris, and Stevenson -- which targeted services to special groups of ninth graders, showed positive differences between the percentage of students showing reading improvement in the targeted and the comparison groups.
- The three schools -- Long Island City, Seward and Wingate -- which provided services to all the incoming ninth graders and the two schools -- Van Buren and Roosevelt -- that served ninth and tenth graders demonstrated lower percentages of targeted students making gains in reading than the comparison group.

Table 4
Percentage of Students Showing Improvement in Math NCE Scores
in Holding Power Targeted and Comparison Groups: 1983-84

SCHOOL	Number of Holding Power Components	Description and Number	Targeted Group N	Targeted Group % Improving	Comparison Group N	Comparison Group % Improving	% Difference
Stevenson	11	Special Group of Ninth graders (N=451)	294	32.0%	308	19.8%	12.2%
Lehman	9	Special Group of Ninth graders (N=214)	117	23.1	113	18.6	4.5
Taft	8	Special Group of Ninth graders (N=513)	265	31.3	246	24.8	6.5
Morris	14	Special Group of Ninth graders (N=236)	160	40.6	154	22.7	17.9
G. Wingate	7	Incoming Ninth graders (N=953)	613	40.0	590	42.2	-2.2
F. D. R.	12	Special Groups of 9th and 10th graders (N=126)	47	23.4	53	32.1	-8.7
M. Van Buren	5	Special Group of 9th and 10th graders (N=34)	22	50.0	23	69.6	-19.6
John Adams	9	Special Group of Ninth graders (N=33)	21	14.3	20	30.0	-15.7

(continued)

Table 4 (Continued)
Percentage of Students Showing Improvement in Math NCE Scores
in Holding Power Targeted and Comparison Groups: 1983-84

SCHOOL	Number of Holding Power Components	Description and Number	Targeted Group N	Targeted Group % Improving	Comparison Group N	Comparison Group % Improving	% Difference
Long Island City	6	Incoming Ninth graders (N=409)	208	50.5	255	56.5	-6.0
Seward Park	5	Incoming Ninth graders (N=675)	274	17.2	238	23.1	-5.9

- The percentage of students improving their math N.C.E. achievement ranged from a low of 14 percent at John Adams to a High of 51 percent at Long Island City.
- Four schools -- Taft, Lehman, Morris, and Stevenson -- which targeted services to special groups of ninth graders, showed positive differences between the percentage of students showing math improvement in the targeted and comparison groups.
- The three schools -- Long Island City, Seward and Wingate -- which provided services to the incoming ninth graders and the two schools -- Van Buren and Roosevelt -- who served ninth and tenth graders demonstrated lower percentages of targeted students making gains in math than the comparison group.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The allocation of holding power funds allowed both demonstrator and buddy schools to expand existing services and to introduce new programs designed to retain and motivate high-risk students. Although three of the ten participating schools targeted some tenth graders, the focus of the programs' efforts was ninth-grade students.

The decision to give each principal budgetary discretion recognized that each school had different student bodies and needs, equipment and facilities, staff strengths and special interests, and administrative priorities. It also represented a vote of confidence in each principal's ability to identify the major obstacles to the academic success of the school's incoming students and to devise a program to address them. The nature of the funding also highlights the necessity of considering the decisions made by each principal -- and their effects -- in relation to that school, rather than in comparison to other schools. Decisions necessarily differed, for example, in those schools which began with well-established counseling programs and those whose counseling staff had been struggling to meet minimally-acceptable levels of student service. Similarly, the decisions made at schools with relatively few high-risk students to concentrate services on them was simply not a possibility at those schools in which large numbers of ninth graders were reading two or more years below grade level, were low socioeconomic status as indicated by eligibility for free lunch, and, in some instances, had had their education interrupted frequently because of their families' mobility.

Administrative decisions were also shaped by the uncertain nature of future funding. One principal addressed this problem by spending most of

his holding power allotment on equipment which could be used for many years, rather than on direct student services which, in the absence of ongoing funding, he would be unable to maintain. The single-year nature of the funding, with renewal at the original level presented only as a possibility, interfered with long-term planning. Instead, administrators could provide for immediate student services, but could not devise a program which allowed first for planning and implementation and later for refinement based on direct experience, staff feedback, and student attendance and achievement. Questions about future funding affected planning both for future incoming ninth graders and for the current target group of ninth graders who would be moving into the tenth grade.

The pairing of principals from exemplary and buddy schools was intended to encourage greater communication between them. The pairings met with some success. They proved most effective in those instances where principals shared an educational philosophy, had had previous professional or personal contact, regarded each other as peers, and believed that both they and their schools benefited from the increased interactions. All of these qualities were evident in the relationship among Stevenson, Lehman, and Morris, the first two paired schools, the third electing to work with the other two. The particular success of communication among them underscores as well the feasability of consortium efforts. The contact of Morris by a fourth Bronx school which was not one of the ten exemplary holding power schools opens also the possibility of expanding this work group beyond the 1983-84 funded schools.

The objective of replicating in buddy schools noteworthy holding power programs from demonstrator schools was met to a very limited degree. The

focus of each school's holding power program reflected the individual principal's approach more than the effect of the pairing. Although three pairs did appear to share each other's programmatic emphasis, the similarity was not always close enough to indicate that the buddy school had, in fact, replicated the demonstrator school's program. While Long Island City, for example, adopted the attendance monitoring focus of its paired school, Seward Park, it might also be seen as having adopted the greater emphasis on attendance monitoring which the holding power funding made possible in all participating schools; in this instance, the demonstrator and buddy schools had infrequent contact with each other. Whereas John Adams, a buddy school, targeted a small group of students, as did its demonstrator school, Van Buren, John Adams did not institute the basic program aspects essential to the Van Buren approach: a mini-school for high-risk students who received extensive counseling and related support services. Replication of successful programs seems to have been best achieved by the Stevenson-Lehman pair. Both focused on counseling and high-interest courses. The Morris principal, who worked closely with them, also selected this emphasis for her holding power program.

With few exceptions, staff members were not involved in interschool contacts or in staff development. Both principals and other staff expressed interest in expanding the interschool communications to administrative, classroom, and support staff who worked closely with target students. The absence of per session funds for after-school meetings and of release time from classroom responsibilities for meetings scheduled during the day were primary obstacles to setting up staff training. Teachers needing to do extensive curriculum development faced the same obstacles.

The student outcomes show that the most successful schools were generally those which served only special groups of ninth graders and had a large number of holding power components. As a whole, targeted students in these schools showed higher attendance, promotional, and achievement rates than their comparison groups. Overall, the most successful changes in student outcomes occurred at Lehman, Morris, and Stevenson.

On the basis of the evaluation findings, the follcwing recommendations are made:

- Decisions about budgetary allotments to address the needs of high risk students should be based, as much as possible, on input from the principal at each school.
- Because of the long-range nature of the dropout problem, funding allotments should be made, where possible, on a multi-year basis which would allow for proper planning and follow-up.
- Consideration should be given to expanding extensive holding power efforts to include concentrated services for tenth-grade students.
- Voluntary consortium efforts among principals and other school staff should be encouraged.
- Release time and/or per session funds should be available for non-administrative staff to participate in interschool meetings, staff training, and curriculum development related to high interest classes.
- A hard-data base (e.g., promotional rates, attendance) for targeted and comparison students should be developed.

APPENDIX A

Profiles of Replicating Holding Power Program Participating Schools

ADLAI STEVENSON HIGH SCHOOL

School Profile: Adlai Stevenson is a zoned, academic-comprehensive high school in the Bronx enrolling 4,663 students. Nearly all (98.3 percent) are minority-group students; 45.9 percent are low-income students; and 41.1 percent are reading two or more years below grade level. Building utilization is 126 percent.

HERBERT H. LEHMAN HIGH SCHOOL

School Profile: Herbert H. Lehman is a zoned, academic-comprehensive high school in the Bronx enrolling 2,168 students. Nearly one-half (47.3 percent) are minority-group students; 19.2 percent are low-income students; and 25.5 percent are reading two or more years below grade level. Building utilization is 76 percent.

SEWARD PARK HIGH SCHOOL

School Profile: Seward Park is an academic-comprehensive high school in Manhattan enrolling 4,140 students. Nearly all (95.8 percent) are minority-group students; 47.8 percent are low-income students; and about one-half (54.5 percent) are reading two or more years below grade level. Building utilization is 155 percent.

LONG ISLAND CITY HIGH SCHOOL

School Profile: Long Island City is a zoned, academic-comprehensive high school in Queens enrolling 2,543 students; about one-half (48.7 percent) are minority-group students; 29.7 percent are low-income students; and 25.1 percent read two or more years below grade level. Building utilization is 149 percent.

WILLIAM TAFT HIGH SCHOOL

School Profile: William Taft is a zoned, academic-comprehensive high school in the Bronx enrolling 2,932 students. Nearly all (99.6 percent) are minority-group students; 100 percent are low-income students; and 60.4 percent are reading two or more years below grade level. Building utilization is 86 percent.

MORRIS HIGH SCHOOL

School Profile: Morris is a zoned, academic-comprehensive high school in the Bronx enrolling 1,953 students. All are minority-group students; 100 percent are low-income students; and nearly two-thirds (64.7 percent) are reading two or more years below grade level. Building utilization is 134 percent.

MARTIN VAN BUREN HIGH SCHOOL

School Profile: Martin Van Buren is a zoned, academic-comprehensive high school in Queens enrolling 2,209 students. About one-half (47.8 percent) are minority-group students; 12.8 percent are low-income students; and less than one-fifth (19.7 percent) are reading two or more years below grade level. Building utilization is 91 percent.

JOHN ADAMS HIGH SCHOOL

School Profile: John Adams is a zoned, academic-comprehensive high school in Queens enrolling 3,326 students. One-half (49.5 percent) are minority-group students; less than one-fifth (16.8 percent) are low-income students; and 26.1 percent read two or more years below grade level. Building utilization is 135 percent.

GEORGE WINGATE HIGH SCHOOL

School Profile: George Wingate is a zoned, academic-comprehensive high school in Brooklyn enrolling 2,825 students. All are minority-group students; over half (58.4 percent) are low-income students; and over one-half (55.0 percent) are reading two or more years below grade level. Building utilization is 117 percent.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL

School Profile: Franklin D. Roosevelt is a zoned, academic-comprehensive high school in Brooklyn enrolling 3,235 students. Less than one-half (44.4 percent) are minority-group students; 38.9 percent are low-income students; and 36.9 percent are reading two or more years below grade level. Building utilization is 110 percent.